

Appl. No.: 10/681,528
Attorney Docket No.: 10541-1808
Amendment in reply to Office Action of June 14, 2005

II. Listing of the Claims

1-7. Cancelled.

8. (Currently Amended): A method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel comprising the steps of:

providing an instrument panel having a plurality of gages mounted thereto;

providing an optical fiber;

applying a masking layer to said optical fiber in areas desired to have a predefined aperture;

selectively applying at least one layer of cladding around the outer surface of the optical fiber ~~in fiber in~~ such a manner to leave at least one predefined aperture on said ~~eable~~ optical fiber free of said cladding;

affixing said optical fiber to said instrument panel in the vicinity of said instrument panel gages;

providing a light source for illuminating said optical fiber.

9. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, wherein said optical fiber is arranged such that said ~~predetermined~~ predefined aperture faces the an area to be illuminated.

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10. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, ~~further comprising the step of applying a masking layer to said optical fiber in areas desired to have a predefined aperture before applying said cladding layer to said optical fiber~~ wherein said masking layer is adapted to resist the application of cladding.

11. (Original): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, further comprising the step of applying high-refractive index paint to said predefined aperture.

12. (Original): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 11, wherein said high-refractive index paint is mixed with dyes that will fluoresce or phosphoresce when excited by optical light from said light source.

13. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, further comprising the step of providing a wheel having mounting a plurality of colored filters interposed between said light source and said fiber to selectively filter the light transmitted to said fiber, wherein a means for selecting said color of light emitted through said aperture is provided.

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14. (Original): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, further comprising the step of providing a plurality of optical fibers with said at least one cladding aperture to illuminate said instrument panel.

15. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, further comprising the step of defining a plurality of said ~~predetermined~~ predefined apertures to said fibers.

16. (Currently Amended): The method of manufacturing an optical fiber illuminated instrument panel of claim 8, wherein said cladding layer blocks at least a portion of light from being emitted from said ~~cable~~ optical fiber.

17-20. Cancelled.

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III. Remarks

Reconsideration and re-examination of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is herein respectfully requested. Claims 1-7 and 17-20 have been cancelled, and claims 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, and 16 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 8-16 remain pending in this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants gratefully acknowledge indication, by the Examiner, of allowable subject matter in dependant claim 10. Accordingly, independent claim 8 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 10.

Objections to the Drawings

The Drawings are objected to by the Examiner. The Applicants have submitted three new drawing sheets having amended Figures 1-6. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these objections to the drawings.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1, 2, 4-9, 13, and 15-19 because of various informalities.

Claims 1, 2, 4-7, and 17-19 have been cancelled.

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Claims 8, 9, 13, 15, and 16 have been amended to correct the informalities. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these objections to the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 1, 5-9, 14-17, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,206,533, issued to Shi (Shi).

The Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 5-7, 17 and 20. Claim 8 has been amended to include the step of "applying a masking layer to said optical fiber in areas desired to have a predefined aperture", from claim 10. In light of the indication, by the Examiner, of allowable subject matter in claim 10, the Applicants assert that claim 8 as amended is patentable over Shi. Further, the Applicants assert that claims 9-16 are patentable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claim 8. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2, 3, 11, 12, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shi in view of United States Patent No. 4,977,487, issued to Okano (Okano). Further, claims 4, 13, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shi in view of United States Patent No. 5,653,519, issued to Dobbs (Dobbs)

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The Applicants have cancelled claims 2, 3, 4, 18, and 19. Claim 8 has been amended to include the step of "applying a masking layer to said optical fiber in areas desired to have a predefined aperture", from claim 10. In light of the indication, by the Examiner, of allowable subject matter in claim 10, the Applicants assert that claim 8 as amended is patentable. Further, the Applicants assert that claims 11, 12, and 13 are patentable as depending, either directly or indirectly, from allowable independent claim 8. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).